

## **UPDATE ON PARTNERSHIP PROGRESS**

### **Strengthening Partnership Governance and Delivery**

1. It is planned to establish a Joint Transport Committee and a Joint Waste Management Committee by the end of September, on the basis of earlier reports to this Partnership Board. A report will be considered by the Cabinet in Bristol and by the Leaders of the other three authorities.
2. Both Joint Executive Committees will:
  - Increase public and private investment to match the high levels of growth, ensure a better quality of life for residents and deliver Vision 2026;
  - Demonstrate a decisive and consistent political focus on key strategic issues which require major investment, joint working and devolution of powers; eg. DFT grant conditions; DEFRA PFI conditions; private investors and contractors;
  - Provide the legal basis for collectively securing, holding and allocating resources, managing and sharing strategic risk, and securing more powers and influence;
  - Exercise control over investment and risk, and benefit from additional local powers devolved from the region, government audit agencies - as envisaged in the Sub-National Review; and
  - Strengthen the operation of the Partnership.
3. The outcomes they will deliver are:
  - A clear direction, with policy and priorities maintained
  - Resources secured, held and allocated effectively
  - Democratic accountability
  - Risk to delivery, budgets and reputation shared and managed
  - Greater public investment, powers and influence secured
  - Greater private and business investor confidence
  - More effective engagement of strategic partners
  - More effective lobbying and promotion of the interests of the sub-region.
4. The following provisions are being made to ensure the Joint Committees are democratically accountable, administered to local authority standards and soundly managed:
  - Each comprises 4 Executive Members.

- The Joint Committees take executive decisions on sub-regional matters within the Councils' Policy and Budget Frameworks, with provision for some to be reserved to Cabinets.
  - Investment in each local authority area requires the support of its Executive Member.
  - There is provision for any authority to reserve a decision to a subsequent meeting to provide for further consideration or more formal resolution procedures.
  - The Joint Committees publish their work programme and key decisions in the Leaders' Forward Plans.
  - The meetings are held in public, administered, convened and conducted as local authority Executives.
  - The Joint Committees have an obligation to engage social, economic and environmental partners, be scrutinised and provide for public participation in meetings.
  - Their prime role is to recommend Policy and Budget Frameworks to the Partnership Board and Cabinets for approval by Councils; and to implement their provisions, seeking prior approval to any decisions outside the Frameworks.
  - There are formal agreements on cost sharing and formal compliance with local authority financial and procurement regulations.
  - Joint working (legal) Agreements underpin the formal relationships, to deal with responsibilities and indemnities and to deal with the consequences of withdrawal from the agreements or projects.
5. Presentations and discussions of waste management proposals are taking place with the Joint Scrutiny Committee and are scheduled with a Scrutiny Commission in Bristol.
6. In the short to medium term the establishment of the Joint Committees will support our negotiations and bids for major transport scheme investment, options for government investment in proposals for future waste management arrangements and the confidence of potential private investors.
7. Proposals for the establishment of a local authority 'delivery' company are being progressed by officers. The purpose of the company would be to:
- Advise on specifying and packaging contracts for major infrastructure projects; and
  - Ensure the delivery of major infrastructure projects within agreed timescales, specification and budget, by effective commissioning of consultants and contractors.

## **Transport**

8. Progress across a range of transport initiatives continues to be made. In summary:

### **Major transport schemes**

- Elements of the Greater Bristol Bus Network are now being implemented whilst work progresses on the Bath Package on the Rapid Transit Line 1 and revised park and ride proposals.

- Business Cases are being developed for Rapid Transit Line 2 - Phase 1: Ashton Vale to Bristol Temple Meads and the Weston Package (both consultation in autumn 2008, bid to Department for Transport early 2009).
- A wide ranging rapid transit technology review is assessing mode options for Line 2 Phase 1 and its recommendations will be considered in October 2008.
- Line 2 – Phase 2 bid will be submitted after completing the appraisal of a range of route options between Temple Meads and Emerson's Green.
- Line 3, from Hengrove to the North Fringe bid submission expected autumn 2009. Consultation on the South Bristol Link is planned for late 2008.
- The Regional Funding Allocation (main source of funds for major transport schemes) has been extended to 2018/19 with an additional £327m.
- The South West Regional Assembly is reviewing the existing RFA programme and any new aspirations.
- A revised Regional Funding Allocation 2 (RFA2) programme of schemes will then be submitted to the Government at the end of February 2009.

## **Rail**

- The Office for Rail Regulation is consulting on funding for Network Rail's Business Plan. A West of England response has been sent stressing support for Bristol Parkway 4<sup>th</sup> platform, Bath Spa capacity enhancement, Weston-super-Mare bay platform, Yate turn back, Westerleigh Junction to Barnt Green line upgrades, four tracking the line to Filton Abbey Wood and resignalling Bristol Temple Meads.
- Elsewhere North Somerset Council's transport consultants have confirmed the viability in principle of re-introducing passenger services to Portishead, subject to identification of possible funding sources. Three miles of trackbed have been purchased by the Council to safeguard the route.
- First Great Western is putting forward a business case to the Department for Transport for re-equipping the Cardiff to Portsmouth (via Bristol and Bath) service with a new fleet of 11 four carriage trains. These new trains will add significant capacity, improve the quality and performance of services and release existing Class 158 trains for use on other local services. The West of England Partnership should be supportive of First Great Western's bid.

## **Congestion**

- A potential bid to the Government's Transport Innovation Fund (TIF) to boost investment in tackling congestion and improving the transport network continues to be explored. A successful bid would help the move towards realising the 20-year transport vision set out in 'Our Future Transport' in October 2007. Subject to the approval of all the councils involved, the aim is to submit a TIF application in 2009.
- In addition the Department for Transport has allocated a further £0.2m of reward funding to the sub-region in 2008/09 following progress towards the West of England Congestion Delivery Plan target.

## **Joint Local Transport Plan**

- The Progress Review 2008 will be published in November. It looks back on progress made during the first 2 years and forwards to the remaining three years of the Plan.

- At present 18 of the 21 JLTP targets are on track. Road safety, cycling, traffic growth and bus patronage (bucking the national trend) are all doing well. Air quality in Bath and Bristol remains a concern.
- Issues around the maintenance of principal roads and footways will be addressed through the new Joint Transport Asset Management Plan (autumn 2008). This is a long term plan setting out how we will manage our transport infrastructure.

### **Joint Transport Forum**

- This annual stakeholder event will be held on 26 September at the @t Bristol centre. Stakeholders will be informed and engaged through a series of updates on transport schemes and group working. The focus will be on the major schemes including Bath Package, Weston Package, South Bristol Link, Rapid Transit, Greater Bristol Bus Network plus reports on the Joint Local Transport Plan Progress Review 2008, Cycling City and other updates. All welcome.

### **Regional Spatial Strategy: Proposed Changes**

9. The government has put forward for consultation, *Proposed Changes to the Draft Regional Spatial Strategy*. Views on the Proposed Changes must be submitted by 24<sup>th</sup> October. When approved by the government, the Regional Spatial Strategy will provide the framework for the preparation by local authorities of local development documents, including Core Strategies, and represent the upper tier of the development plan. It will set out the broad planning strategy for the South West Region, the broad spatial strategy for the West of England and in particular the levels and broad distribution and numbers of additional dwellings to be provided for by local authority development documents for the period 2006 to 2026.
10. The Proposed Changes maintain the general approach of the Draft Regional Spatial Strategy prepared by the South West Regional Assembly and submitted to government in June 2006. It carries forward the Regional Economic Strategy aspirations for growth and greater prosperity for all communities. It seeks to manage this growth and the development arising in ways that improve the quality of life for all and contribute to the creation and maintenance of sustainable communities.
11. The spatial strategy set out by the Proposed Changes maintains the spatial priorities of Draft Regional Spatial Strategy and along with the positive attitude to growth, is broadly consistent with the 'vision' of the Partnership. The Proposed Changes therefore continues to focus development on the main urban areas of the sub-region and promote the regeneration of south Bristol and Weston-super-Mare. However, significant differences in emphasis compared with the priorities and concerns of the Partnership are emerging. In summary, the more significant differences comprise:
  - the overall level of growth proposed represents a significant further challenge; (the level of additional dwellings shown by the Proposed Changes compared with the Draft Regional Spatial is appended to this report);
  - the constant (rather than profiled) annual rate of housing completions proposed at sub-regional and district levels is unrealistic given the start-up

periods involved in bringing forward the major developments required to achieve the levels of development proposed by RSS;

- the dwelling provisions for several key locations exceed assessed development capacities; greater locational flexibility should be provided by RSS;
- there is insufficient clarity about the considerable new infrastructure required to support the long-term development of the sub-region; and,
- the proposal for an immediate Partial Review of the RSS following its approval, and ahead of the Integrated Regional Strategy, will distract from the effective and comprehensive planning of the sub-region.

12. Further consideration of these concerns is being given by officers of the Partnership in consultation with officers of the local authorities and members of the Partnership's Planning, Housing and Communities Board. This is expected to lead to the preparation of a joint response to the Regional Spatial Strategy Proposed Changes on behalf of the Partnership later in October.

Terry Wagstaff  
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## Housing Figures for the West of England

Dwelling allocations by District and locations: Draft RSS compared with Panel Modifications and the Secretary of State Proposed Changes.

2006-2026				Annual allocations		
Area	Draft RSS Allocation	Draft RSS Panel Recommendations	Secretary of State Proposed Changes	Draft RSS Allocation	Draft RSS Panel Recommendations	Secretary of State Proposed Changes
	2006-2026			2006-2026		
<b>B&amp;NES</b>	15,500	18,800	21,300	775	940	1,065
<b>Bristol</b>	28,000	30,000	36,500	1,400	1,500	1,825
<b>North Somerset</b>	26,000	26,750	26,750	1,300	1,338	1,338
<b>South Glos.</b>	23,000	30,800	32,800	1,150	1,540	1,640
<b>West of England Sub-region</b>	<b>92,500</b>	<b>106,350</b>	<b>117,350</b>	<b>4,625</b>	<b>5,318</b>	<b>5,868</b>

<b>Locations</b>	<b>Draft RSS allocations</b>	<b>Draft RSS Panel Modifications</b>	<b>Secretary of State Proposed Changes to the RSS</b>
<b>Bristol City</b>	<b>28,000</b>	<b>30,000</b>	<b>36,500</b>
Bristol urban area	26,500	28,500	33,500
Urban extension (part of area of search A)	1,500	1,500	1,500
Bristol urban extension (area of Search B)			1,500
<b>South Gloucestershire</b>	<b>23,000</b>	<b>30,800</b>	<b>32,800</b>
Urban Area	13,000	15,500	17,500
Urban Extension (areas of search C)	8,000	8,000	8,000
Urban Extension (areas of search D)			2,000
Areas of Search at Yate	0	5,000	3,000
Remainder of District	2,000	2,300	2,300
<b>North Somerset</b>	<b>26,000</b>	<b>26,750</b>	<b>26,750</b>
WsM urban Area	3,000	3,000	3,000
Bristol Urban Extension (part of area of search A)	9,000	9,000	9,000
WsM Urban Extension (area of search F panel mods) (area of search H proposed changes)	9,000	9,000	9,000
Remainder of district	5,000	5,750	5,750
<b>B&amp;NES</b>	<b>15,500</b>	<b>18,800</b>	<b>21,300</b>
Bath Urban Area	6,000	6,000	6,000
Bath Urban Extension (Area of Search E)	1,500	1,500	2,000
Bristol Urban Extension (Area of Search B)	6,000	6,000	8,000
Area of Search at Keynsham (listed as area of search 1F in proposed changes)	0	3,000	3,000
Remainder of District	2,000	2,300	2,300